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**Barney S. Heath**  
Director

Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Lara Kritzer, Community Preservation Programs Manager  
City of Newton  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
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December 18, 2020

Dear Community Preservation Committee members:

The Department of Planning and Development is pleased to submit this application for additional CPA funding for the COVID-19 Emergency Housing Relief Program. Over the past six months, this critical program has served over 200 Newton households negatively impacted by COVID-19, providing much-needed housing stability during a time of public health and economic uncertainty. Our program administrator, Metro West Collaborative Development, has done an impressive job working with some of our city's most vulnerable households, helping them navigate the application process to receive necessary financial assistance to stay housed as the pandemic continues to tear through our country.

To-date, the program has awarded over \$1.6 million to 211 households. Over half of the households served have an annual income at or below 30% of the area median income (AMI), and over 90% have incomes at or below 65%. As demonstrated through these numbers, the program is supporting those Newton households whose financial income was already taxed by the high cost of living in our community even before the coronavirus added another layer of challenge. Furthermore, approximately 60% of individuals served by the program are people of color, with 16% identifying as Black/African American, 11% as Asian, and 28% as Hispanic/Latino.

Initially conceived as a three-month program, we quickly realized that most households' situation is unlikely to improve until our country "returns to normal." In September and then again in early December, the CPC generously agreed to allow us to modify the program guidelines to provide three-month extensions to program participants to provide up to eight months of housing assistance for those households that can prove continued eligibility at the end of each three months of support. These extensions have provided the opportunity for the 134 initial households who entered the program in July (and have sought continued assistance) to receive assistance through the end of February 2021. As the crisis continues, however, we know that many of these households will still be

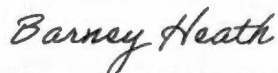
struggling to pay their rent or mortgage at that time. With the Massachusetts eviction moratorium having come to an end in October and the CDC eviction moratorium expiring on December 31, 2020, we know that continued financial support to keep individuals and families safely housed through the winter and spring is of the utmost importance as we work to do our part to keep our community safe.

The attached proposal requests an additional \$1,200,000 in CPA funds to continue to directly assist households at or below 80% AMI in providing up to twelve months of rental payments, or mortgage payments for those already living in affordable deed-restricted units. We project that over the life of the program (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021), approximately 250 Newton households will be served. This additional funding will not only help to keep the existing 200 or so program participants in their homes over the next six months, but also provides the opportunity for approximately 70 new households to enter the program and receive housing assistance between now and June 30, 2021, the proposed end date of the program.

The City's co-applicant in this application, Metro West Collaborative Development, will continue administer the day-to-day activities of the program, including the application process, applicant certification and re-certification, waiting list, and funding distribution. The Community Development and Housing Division of the Planning and Development Department will continue to work closely with Metro West CD to ensure the success of the program.

I look forward to presenting the additional funding request to the Committee at its meeting on January 12, 2021. Please feel free to contact me in the meantime if you have any questions or would like any further information.

Sincerely,



Barney Heath, Director  
Planning and Development Department